



# Maryland Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Network Newsletter

**WITH HELP COMES HOPE**

## School Connectedness and Suicide Prevention

In 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) adopted promoting connectedness as its strategic direction for preventing suicidal behavior. The CDC defines connectedness as “the degree to which a person or group is socially close, interrelated, or shares resources with other persons of groups.”

School connectedness, in particular, is a belief held by students that adults and peers in the school care about them as individuals as well as their learning. While a focus on risky behaviors such as tobacco and drug use or violence is important, there are now studies demonstrating protective factors that prevent risky behaviors may produce a greater impact on health outcomes.

The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health found that school connectedness was second in efficacy, after family connectedness, as a protective factor against emotional distress, disordered

eating, and suicidal ideation and attempts. Factors that can increase school connectedness include adults dedicating time and emotional support to students, belonging to a positive peer group, students believing that school is important to their future, and the school environment.

Families and communities must also work with schools to create a healthy environment for children and adolescents. This prevention strategy, in combination with evidence-based health promotion programs, has the greatest impact on students’ health and education.



**MARYLAND**  
Department of Health  
Maryland’s Commitment to Veterans

Maryland’s Commitment to Veterans (MCV) is a program devoted to total wellness for veterans and their families.

MCV provides training to the community about veteran-specific topics to improve awareness of available behavioral health resources. Regional resource coordinators provide assistance to veterans and their families to support a healthy transition to civilian life.

To connect to a regional resource coordinator, call the MCV referral line at **877-770-4801**.

### **Suicide Prevention**

Visit our [website](#) for archived webinars, training opportunities, archived newsletters, resources, and fact sheets.

For additional support, guidance, and assistance, call 211, and select option 1; or, text your zip code to 898-211.

## School Department Combines Efforts to Address Suicide, Mental Health

Queen Anne's County (QAC) Public Schools Department of Student Support Services recently announced the merger of two committees so they can better address mental health, bullying, harassment, and suicide prevention. The QAC Anti-Bullying Committee and the Partnership for Suicide Prevention merged to form the QAC Safety Net.

Through the merger, both committees will be able to streamline their efforts and address problems more effectively. Safety Net participants will continue to be involved in project-based initiatives, including the Out of the Darkness Walks, Youth Mental Health First Aid, safeTALK, Kognito, school climate initiatives, and professional development opportunities for educators and parents.

Gatekeeper trainings, such as safeTALK and Kognito, can help to improve individual knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes that may result in intervention behavior.

Gatekeeper trainings may be offered online or in-person but typically follow a similar format. Gatekeeper trainings help participants become prepared to help someone with thoughts of suicide by teaching the signs to look for indicating someone may be experiencing mental distress or be in crisis. After teaching the signs to look for, gatekeeper trainings then introduce an intervention model that participants can use to help keep a person with thoughts of suicide safe. MD-SPIN has trained a total of 32,715 Marylanders in Kognito since 2014.

Schools play an important role in suicide prevention. The connection between bullying, mental health, and suicide is complex but must be addressed. Bullying can be one of a number of risk factors for suicide. An integrated approach is necessary to address suicide prevention, including individual coping skills, family and school support, and safe school environments.



## International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

In 1999, Senator Harry Reid introduced a resolution to the United States Senate which led to the creation of National Survivors of Suicide Day: a day when the friends and family of those who have died by suicide can join together for healing and support. Reid is a survivor of his father's suicide.

As citizens of other countries began observing the day in their local communities, it was renamed International Survivors of Suicide Day. This day always falls on the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

Every year, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

(AFSP) sponsors International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, a program uniting survivors of suicide loss across the world.

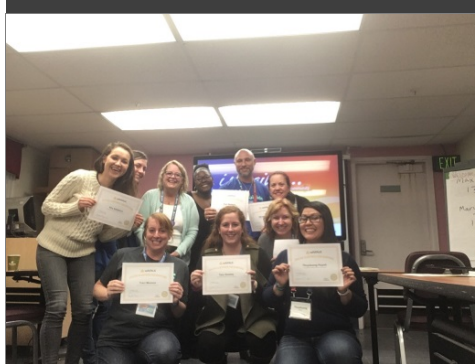
On Nov. 17, 2018, AFSP held events in hundreds of cities spanning six continents, bringing together people affected by suicide loss in their local communities to find comfort and gain understanding as they shared stories of healing and hope.

The Maryland Department of Health, Behavioral Health Administration held a Twitterstorm to promote the day and there were online events organized by AFSP, including Facebook Live discussions and a Twitter chat.

In 2019, International Survivors of Suicide Day will be observed on Nov. 23.



## TRAINING SNAPSHOT



### New safeTALK Trainers

Congratulations to the 16 new trainer candidates who completed the safeTALK Training for Trainers (T4T) on Nov. 30-Dec. 1, 2018! There will be another T4T on March 13-14, 2019. Apply [here](#).



### New ASIST-Trained Caregivers

Twelve members of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police were trained in ASIST Dec. 11-12, 2018. Thanks for making Maryland suicide-safer!

## FAST FACTS

33%

There was a 33 percent increase in the national suicide rate from 1999 to 2017.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit [AFSP's](#) website for more information on Survivor's Day.

# Survivor's Day: A Perspective from a Suicide Loss Survivor

By: Jennilyn Landbeck

On Nov. 17, 2018, I participated in my first Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, sponsored by AFSP. I heard about it at a "Lunch & Learn" put on by the Office of Health Promotion and Prevention last summer at Spring Grove Hospital in Catonsville.

We lost our son four years ago and this is the **first** time I learned that such an event was celebrated! How did I miss this? How can we better help families who have endured a loss know that there is a thoughtful group gathering that isn't like other grief support groups? How did it miss us for so long?

AFSP was looking for a venue in Harford County, MD, and since it is free and open to the public, I was certain that the church I attend would be okay with the group using one of the meeting houses. I received permission, and ended up hosting the event, even though I hadn't been to an event yet. My first one was amazing. It helped being able to preview the new film for 2018 titled "A Daughter's Journey" and to see past films. I was able to bawl in private and then used the study guides online to lead the discussion.

Everyone who attended had a moment of tears, but it felt life-affirming, positive, and helpful. Hearing how others are dealing with grief was eye-opening. I left feeling better. The pizza and cheesecake added to the night. We also made Christmas ornaments with our loved one's names and I sent them home with a holiday themed tissue box.

We talked about how to survive as extended families during the holidays. This includes self-care, drinking lots of water, rest, saying our loved one's name, and sharing good memories.

Attendees brought photos of their loved one. I reached out to four different families who didn't attend, but I knew they lost a family member to suicide. I gave them a packet of AFSP handouts and an early invitation to the event on Nov. 23, 2019.

Mark your calendars for every Saturday before Thanksgiving as Suicide Loss Survivor Day and please make sure people hear about it. We have a daughter living in California and two of our sons were visiting her for Thanksgiving, so they all registered online for the closest one to them. They attended a nice brunch and saw the film the same day.

I'd like to say a big thank you to this nation-wide program that helped our family in our journey of healing.

*Jennilyn Landbeck is a survivor of suicide loss and also serves on the Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention. Jennilyn has spoken at conferences and supports suicide prevention efforts in her local community.*

# Updates from the Field

## Sexual Orientation, Gender, and Attempted Suicide Among Adolescent Inpatients

A recent study found that female and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBQ) adolescents admitted to an inpatient psychiatric hospital were at elevated risk for attempted suicide. This replicates a finding that is well established in general adolescent populations using a high-risk, clinical sample. [Read more.](#)

## Suicide Rates by Major Occupational Group - 17 States, 2012-2015

According to a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report, men who work in construction and extraction have the highest suicide rates of any occupational group. Among women, suicide rates were highest in the arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media fields. Read the [full report.](#)

## Major Traumatic Injury Increases Risk of Mental Health Diagnosis, Suicide

People who experience major injury are at increased risk for subsequent mental illness and suicide, according to a recent study in Canada. They found that serious injury was associated with an increased risk of developing a mental health condition and dying by suicide in the years afterward. Read the [full study.](#)

## U.S. Life Expectancy Drops amid "Disturbing" Rise in Overdoses and Suicides

National data suggest a decline in U.S. life expectancy is partly due to increased suicide and overdose deaths. According to three reports released last week by the CDC, life expectancy fell to 78.6 years in 2017, down 0.1 from the year before. [Read More.](#)

## Rocky Mountain Short Takes on Suicide Prevention: On Empathy and Caring

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has released a new

[podcast interview](#) with Lena Heilmann, a suicide loss survivor and youth suicide prevention coordinator at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. She discusses her lived experience with suicide loss and gives an overview of prevention efforts in Colorado.

## 2016 NVDRS Data Now Available in WISQARS

The CDC has recently updates its Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System ([WISQARS](#)) to include [2016 data](#) from the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS).

## Trends in the Prevalence of Suicide-Related Behaviors, National YRBS 1991-2017

The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) monitors health behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. Read the [fact sheet.](#)

## CDC Finds Suicide Rates Increasing

According to a recent data brief from the CDC National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), from 1999 through 2017 the age-adjusted suicide rate increased 33 percent from 10.5 to 14.0 per 100,000. [Read more.](#)

## New Faith.Hope.Life Campaign Website Presence

The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention Faith Communities Task Force has developed a new [website](#) for its campaign.

## Suicide Among Emergency Medical Technicians Compared to the General Public

A new study found that emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are also at higher risk of suicide death than the general population. [Read more.](#)

## Firearm Homicides and Suicides in Major U.S. Metropolitan Areas

The CDC has released a [report](#) on homicide and suicide rates in major U.S. metropolitan areas. It found that firearm homicide and suicide

rates increased in large metro areas and the nation overall

# Announcements

## Revamped National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention Website

The National Action Alliance of Suicide Prevention — the nation's public-private partnership — has launched a revamped [website](#). Features include: About Us, Our Strategy, and Resource Library.

## CDC Launces New Violence Prevention Resource

The CDC has launched a new [online resource](#) to help states and communities use best practices to prevent violence. The resource offers guidance on how to select and implement strategies in the Division of Violence Prevention's (DVP) [technical packages.](#)

## NIMH Facebook Live Event Now Available

The National Institute of Mental Health's (NIMH) recent Facebook live event on suicide prevention is now [available online](#). NIMH Director Joshua Gordon and Jane Pearson, chair of the NIMH Division of Services and Intervention Research (DSIR) Suicide Research Consortium, discuss recent research findings, warning signs, and prevention strategies.

## Integrating Suicide Prevention into the SBIRT Model - Free Webinar

On Jan. 24, NORC at the University of Chicago will hold a free webinar on how suicide screening and intervention can be integrated into the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment Model. Register [here.](#)

## Maryland's 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Suicide Prevention Conference - Call for Presentations

The deadline for presentation proposals is Jan. 31. Submit the [application](#) and supporting documents to [mdh.suicideprevention@maryland.gov](mailto:mdh.suicideprevention@maryland.gov).

# Events

## January

Jan. 15	<b>CDP Presents Blueprints for Suicide Treatment in the Military: The Lost Art of Case Conceptualization Online via Zoom</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Jan. 24	<b>Integrating Suicide Prevention into the SBIRT Model</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Jan. 24-25	<b>Online Prolonged Exposure (PE) Training via Second Life</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>

## February

Feb. 2	<b>Emotional Emancipation Circle 21217</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 2	<b>Equilibrium: Yoga for Anxiety</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 2	<b>Integrating Mental Health Wellness &amp; Pharmacology</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 4	<b>Youth Anger Management Group</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 4	<b>Opioid Overdose Response Training</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb 4-5	<b>Online Suicide Prevention Training via Zoom</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 5	<b>MHAMD's Legislative Briefing &amp; Reception</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 5	<b>Writing for My Sanity, Therapeutic Writing and Meditation Workshop</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 6	<b>Save a Life — Narcan Training at Glen Burnie Library</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 6	<b>Undo Stress Yoga Class</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 7	<b>New Mom Support Group for Post Partum Depression</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 8	<b>An Introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia for Adults</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb.9	<b>Design Your Healing</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 9	<b>Mantra Meditation@ the Crofton Library</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 16	<b>SafeTALK Training - The Tent at Mt Zion, Bel Air, MD</b>	<a href="#">Email</a>
Feb. 16	<b>Karuna Training is coming to Baltimore! A Training in Engaged Compassion</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 16	<b>Accessing Home &amp; Community-based Services for Older Adults</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 19	<b>Suicide in Older Adults: Risks, Myths and Intervention</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 21	<b>Postvention as Prevention: Supporting Suicide-Loss Survivors</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 27	<b>Happy Brain, Happy Body</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
Feb. 28	<b>MGT-409 Community Healthcare Planning and Response to Disasters</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>

## March

March 14	<b>Narcan Training at Glen Burnie Library</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
March 20	<b>Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention</b>	<a href="#">Information</a>
March 21	<b>Resources for Caregivers in Service to our Men and Women Who've Served</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
March 21	<b>Recognizing, Responding, and Resources for Brain Injury in Crisis</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
March 22	<b>Mental Health America Conference</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
March 27	<b>Healing Strings and Yoga</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
March 28	<b>Consent: Creating Safe Space &amp; Setting Boundaries with Nate Couser</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>

## Keep Up With Us

[Join](#) our email distribution list | Visit our [website](#) | [Follow](#) us on Twitter @MDSuicidePrev

### About MD-SPIN

Maryland's Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Network (MD-SPIN) provides a continuum of suicide prevention training, resources, and technical assistance to advance the development of a comprehensive suicide prevention and early intervention service system for youth and young adults. MD-SPIN will increase the number of youth, ages 10-24, identified, referred and receiving quality behavioral health services, with a focus on serving high risk youth populations (LGBTQ, transition age, veterans and military families, youth with emotional and behavioral concerns) and in target settings (schools, colleges/universities, juvenile services facilities, primary care, emergency departments).

### Maryland Behavioral Health Administration Mission

The Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration will develop an integrated process for planning, policy and services to ensure a coordinated quality system of care is available to individuals with behavioral health conditions. The BHA will, through publicly-funded services and support, promote recovery, resiliency, health and wellness for individuals who have or are at risk for emotional, substance related, addictive, and/or psychiatric disorders.

